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QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD

Letter dated 10 April 2000 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights

I have the honour to transmit, enclosed herewith,* a letter addressed by H.E. Mrs. Bratislava Morina, the Federal Minister for Refugees, Displaced Persons and Humanitarian Aid of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to H.E. Mrs. Mary Robinson, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

I would like to ask you to have it circulated as an official document of the fifty-sixth session of the Commission on Human Rights under agenda item 9.

(Signed) Branko BRANKOVIC
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

* The annex is reproduced as received, in English only.

Annex

Dear Mrs. Robinson,

As you hold a high-ranking and responsible office within the UN system in the field of human rights, I have decided to write you in order to bring to your attention the grave humanitarian situation in FR Yugoslavia. I believe you are aware that FR Yugoslavia is a country that is providing for the needs of the largest number of refugees and displaced persons in Europe. Despite the grave economic situation brought about by the NATO aggression, unilateral sanctions, restrictions, pressures and politicization of humanitarian aid, FR Yugoslavia has for as many as nine years been providing care to 700,000 refugees from Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Republic of Croatia.

The humanitarian situation has worsened even further with the influx of more than 350,000 Serb and non-Albanian expellees from Kosovo and Metohija as a result of ten months of daily brutal and massive violations of the human rights of Serbs and other non-Albanians by Albanian terrorists and separatists. While the competent authorities of FR Yugoslavia have taken measures to ensure respect for all human rights that these persons are entitled to as citizens of FR Yugoslavia, their future needs will prove even more difficult to meet unless the international community extends substantial humanitarian aid and development assistance.

As for the disastrous situation in Kosovo and Metohija and the perpetuation of the systematic campaign of ethnic cleansing and terror against non-Albanians, the greatest responsibility for it is borne by not only the actual perpetrators - Albanian terrorists of the so-called KLA transformed into the " Kosovo Protection Corps" - but even more so by the UN Interim Mission in Kosovo and Metohija headed by B.Kouchner. UNMIK has done nothing to put Albanian terrorists under control. It has done nothing to consistently implement the mandate it was given under Security Council resolution 1244 - to protect full personal and property security and basic human rights for all citizens of Kosovo and Metohija as well as to preserve the multi-ethnic, multi-confessional and multi-cultural nature of this Province.

If the international community truly wants to preserve a multi-ethnic Kosovo and Metohija, it is high time it took effective steps towards creating conditions for the return of the expelled non-Albanian population.

Regardless of the fact that the troops in Kosovo and Metohija operate under the auspices of the World Organization that you yourself are a part of, I believe it would be useful to hear in public your views and fair assessments of this situation, all the more so as the 56th session of the Commission on Human Rights is under way. You and the Commission member countries shoulder huge and permanent responsibility for every aspect of human rights violations worldwide, no matter who has committed them.

Mrs. Mary Robinson
UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
Geneva

I wish to remind you that my Government has on several occasions communicated to the United Nations and to your personally, exact, fair and exhaustive data on the most cruel and diverse forms of human rights violations in Kosovo and Metohija. Last year and earlier this year, we sent to your Geneva Office, i.e. to a number of special rapporteurs ant thematic issues experts, as well as to the Working Groups of the Commission on Human Rights, several letters calling on the addressees to review various cases of violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms of the still remaining non-Albanians in Kosovo and Metohija. Regrettably, we have so far not registered any response by those rapporteurs, experts of Working Groups.

Since KFOR and UNMIK were deployed, more than 350,000 Serbs, Montenegrins, Roma and other non-Albanians have been expelled from Kosovo and Metohija. The most insidious methods of pressures have been used along with threats, blackmails, intimidation, violent usurpation, plundering and burning of property, killings, rapes and abductions. The scope of terror to which non-Albanians in K&M have been subjected is illustrated by the fact that in the period from 10 June 1999 to 30 March 2000 4.564 terrorist attacks were carried out, 867 persons were kidnapped, 936 were killed and 876 injured. The largest part of the Province, including almost all major towns, has been totally ethnically cleansed of non-Albanians. Their homes and apartments have been violently occupied by ethnic Albanians including 250,000 citizens of Albania, who had illegally entered the province by crossing the unprotected borders with Albania and Macedonia.

In the most recent history of the World Organization there have not been any cases similar to the mass violations of the human and civil rights of Serbs and other non-Albanians in K&M or any cases involving such wide-ranging racial, religious, national and linguistic discrimination in the presence of a UN Mission. By adopting a tolerant and protective attitude to genocide perpetrated by Albanian terrorists, UNMIK has trampled upon the basic principles of the UN Charter and all major human rights conventions while pursuing and unexampled policy of double standards.

For this reason, the Yugoslav general public and the Yugoslav Government believe that the principled and energetic resistance of the UN, i.e. those that are most qualified in the matters of human rights protection, against the protagonists of the policy of genocide in K&M, not only is of vital importance to halting human tragedy in K&M but will ensure that the very fundaments and principles underlying the United Nations are preserved.

I rightfully hope and expect from you, Madam High Commissioner, to do everything in your power to stop the pogrom against Serbs and other non-Albanians in K&M. The tragic status of human rights calls for urgent and efficient action by all competent international factor and should be spearheaded by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Please accept the assurances of my high esteem.

(signed) Bratislava Morina,
FEDERAL MINISTER

Belgrade, 6th April 2000